
Graphics and Audio Notes

- There **will** be a sermon starter video.
- There **will** be notes and / or scripture to show on screen during the sermon.
- After the scripture reading, Andrew will introduce a guest speaker from the Gideons. There will be a video before the Gideons presentation. Following the Gideons presentation, Andrew will share this message.



Text highlighted in this way have a slide prepared to be on screen.

Text highlighted in this way are a reminder for Andrew during delivery.

Text highlighted in this way are direction for Andrew during delivery.

Key Questions

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about steps to start reading the Bible.

Why is this sermon important?

It is important because reading the Bible is a primary spiritual discipline and a powerful way to grow in faith.

What is the good news?

The good news is that the God of the universe speaks to us through the Bible.

What are the next action steps?

You are invited to start a plan to read the Bible and join a Wesley Small Group

What is the context of this sermon?

This sermon is preached on the same Sunday as a Gideon presentation and concludes the two part worship series. It is adapted from a Facebook post from Matt Miofsky, United Methodist preacher in Missouri.

Metadata

Topics

- Grow
- Make Disciples

Sermon Books of the Bible

- Romans

Tags

sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, Eldorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnualConference, Bible, Biblereading, spiritualdiscipline, spiritualdisciplines

Sermon Audio

9 a.m. Worship

11 a.m. Worship

Introduction **5**

Romans 7:15, 18-20, 24-25, CEB

Response to Scripture

Sermon Starter Video

Opening Story **5**

One Word

One Specific Word

Series Point

Simple Steps to Read the Bible **6**

Step 1 - Get a Good Translation

Common English Bible (CEB)

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Pick up a Copy

Download the Bible App

Step 2 - Who, When, Where

Find a Partner or Group

Find a Time

Find a Spot

Step 3 - Find a Plan

Short, Daily Plan

Plan in Bulletin

Plan in Bible App

Step 4 - Commit Daily

Read Daily

Check In with Partner(s)

Step 5 - Longer Plan?

After Six Months

Journal

Step 6 - Switch it Up

Reading Plan

Devotional

Pray

Wesley Small Group

Bring your Bible

Step 7 - Don't Give Up

Wins and Losses

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Good News

Call to Action

Invitation

Closing Prayer

Introduction

Romans 7:15, 18-20, 24-25, CEB

¹⁵I don't know what I'm doing, because I don't do what I want to do. Instead, I do the thing that I hate.

¹⁸I know that good doesn't live in me—that is, in my body. The desire to do good is inside of me, but I can't do it. ¹⁹I don't do the good that I want to do, but I do the evil that I don't want to do. ²⁰But if I do the very thing that I don't want to do, then I'm not the one doing it anymore. Instead, it is sin that lives in me that is doing it.

²⁴I'm a miserable human being. Who will deliver me from this dead corpse? ²⁵Thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then I'm a slave to God's Law in my mind, but I'm a slave to sin's law in my body.

Response to Scripture

One: The word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.



Opening Story

One Word

So I don't know about you, maybe some of you would like to get in better shape or lose some weight, eat better, maybe be more spiritually focused this year, perhaps spend more time with your kids. Maybe some of you want to get better with your money or quit some kind of annoying habit. I don't know what it would be, but there is something about a fresh start that just brings hope.

One Specific Word

So here's your assignment, very simple, and very focused, very direct and very doable. What I'm going to challenge you to do is get as focused as you can.

What I want to do is I want to ask you to seek God for one specific word that will define and direct the rest of the month.

One word. And then you can also put a verse to it, because this is not going to be by our might or by our power, but by God's Spirit that God will empower us to move forward.

Series Point

It's often the small things that no one sees that result in the big things that everyone wants.

Simple Steps to Read the Bible¹

For anyone who wants to try to read the Bible more often, but doesn't know where to start. I feel you. This is for you!

7 simple steps to reading the Bible that (hopefully) doesn't leave you frustrated, confused or giving up after a few days.

Step 1 - Get a Good Translation

1) Get a Good Translation

Common English Bible (CEB)

Get a good translation of the Bible (leave grandma's King James Version on the shelf). I recommend getting the Common English Bible or CEB. It is an accurate, scholarly translation written in accessible language without overly technical religious words.

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

If you are ready for a deeper dive into scripture, get the New Revised Standard Version Study Bible.

Pick up a Copy

If you like an actual book, just search Amazon for the CEB Bible or pick one up for free at the church office.

¹ Adapted from <https://www.facebook.com/miofsky/posts/10155650317812845>

Download the Bible App

I recommend also downloading the free app YouVersion. It includes dozens of translations and offers several reading plans along with daily reminders.

Step 2 - Who, When, Where

- 1) Get a Good Translation
- 2) Who, When, Where

Find a Partner or Group

Find a friend who will commit to reading with you. This person will serve as your accountability partner and a person to talk with about what your reading. You can meet with them once a month or so to just talk about what you are learning.

You can also read the Bible as part of a Wesley Small Group. We are launching a group on Sunday morning at 10 a.m. in the Library starting August 13.

Find a Time

Pick a time each day that you will do your reading (you will need about 10 minutes). Stick with the time as this makes the creation of a habit much easier.

Find a Spot

Find a spot that you like to read, a comfortable chair or nook. Keep your Bible out and sitting in this spot as a reminder of your commitment. Arranging a time and creating a space makes it much easier to sit and read in the midst of those crazy days. Don't skip this step.

Step 3 - Find a Plan

- 1) Get a Good Translation
- 2) Who, When, Where
- 3) Find a Plan

Short, Daily Plan

Find a short, daily reading plan that you can follow. Don't just start at the beginning and try to read the whole Bible. Start with a plan that is about month long or less and requires less than 10 minutes of reading each day.

Plan in Bulletin

You can use the reading plan that you find in the bulletin this week to stay connected with our worship plan.

Plan in Bible App

You can find several of these plans under the "Plans" tab in the Bible app. There are topical plans, plans for newbies, and plans that focus on certain books. Pick one that is interesting to you. This is supposed to be fun.

Step 4 - Commit Daily

- 1) Get a Good Translation
- 2) Who, When, Where
- 3) Find a Plan

4) Commit Daily

Read Daily

Commit to reading daily until you finish the plan. If you miss a day, just keep going. Get a win under your belt by finishing a short plan.

Check In with Partner(s)

Talk to your accountability partner after you complete it and then begin another short-term reading plan as you build a daily habit.

Step 5 - Longer Plan?

- 2) Who, When, Where
- 3) Find a Plan
- 4) Commit Daily
- 5) Longer Plan?

After Six Months

After a six months or so of doing short-term plans then try a longer daily reading plan (like the Bible in year). It becomes much easier to complete a more ambitious plan after you create the daily habit.

Journal

Keep a little journal of insights and ways that God is speaking to you over time as you read.

Step 6 - Switch it Up

- 3) Find a Plan
- 4) Commit Daily
- 5) Longer Plan?
- 6) Switch it Up

Reading Plan

Switch up your reading plan often to keep it fresh and interesting.

Devotional

Buy a good devotional that has daily readings included or pick up a copy of the Upper Room which is a great daily devotional free here at the church.

Pray

Pray a short prayer each time to sit down to read.

Wesley Small Group

Get in a Wesley Small Group that encourages you to continue.

Bring your Bible

Bring your Bible to worship. Having it with you, following along in it, and perusing through it will help you become more familiar with it over time.

Step 7 - Don't Give Up

- 4) Commit Daily

- 5) Longer Plan?
- 6) Switch it Up
- 7) Don't Give Up

Wins and Losses

You will have wins and losses. You will do great for a week and then there will be others weeks that despite your best intentions, you skip and miss.

Just Keep Going

Don't give up, don't feel bad, and don't beat yourself up. Just hop back in and start. Every day is a new day and a perfect time to reestablish the habit.

Conclusion

Good News

The good news is that the God of the universe speaks to us through the Bible.

Call to Action

Join me in a reading plan.
Build the habit of small things.

Invitation

Allow God to work through them to make a big difference.

Closing Prayer

Jesus, I am sorry for all the times in my life when I mess up.

And if anything comes to mind, ask God's forgiveness.

Forgive me of my sin and all that I know is wrong.
Thank you that you died on the cross and rose for me.
I trust you with my life.
Help me receive your forgiveness.
Please fill me with your Spirit and help me to follow you.
In your holy name, Amen.